DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 991 IR 001 675

TITLE Proposed Weekly Punched Card Transaction System.
INSTITUTION Glendale Public Library, Calif.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 5p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Cost Effectiveness; Costs; *Electronic Data Processing; *Library Automation; *Library Circulation; Library Technical Processes; *Public Libraries; *Work Simplification
IDENTIFIERS *Glendale Public Library; Overdue Notices

ABSTRACT

In a continuing effort to reduce costs and improve internal processes, the Glendale Public Library's book charging and overdue determination system has been examined and an improved method conceived which will free badly needed labor hours within the library. It is proposed that the present photocharging transaction card system be kept, but the handling of transaction cards for the generation of overdue lists be changed from the manual McBee keysort system to a computer processed punched card system. In addition, it is suggested that the date due and overdue system be changed from a daily to a weekly system, which will reduce the clerical load, reduce the computer printout load, and allow more local flexibility in performing staff work. The cost difference between the present and proposed systems is not realizable in dollar savings, but rather in terms of circulation personnel labor that would be freed for other work presently being neglected. (Author/SL)

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CITY OF GLENDALE

LIBRARY DIVISION

CIRCULATION STUDY

PROPOSED WEEKLY PUNCHED CARD TRANSACTION SYSTEM

Introduction

In a continuing effort to reduce costs and improve internal processes, the Library Division's book charging and overdue determination system has been examined and an improved method conceived which will free badly needed labor hours within the library for staff work which is falling behind.

System Background

The present basic system is a photocharging transaction card system which is used by most public libraries and is an excellent system. This proposal is for improved processing rather than a change in the basic system.

At book check out (charge) the book data check card, the borrower's library card, and a serial-number transaction card with the due date are photographed. The transaction card (T-card) goes out with the book and upon the book's return (discharge) the T-card is removed and processed for the overdue data. At the end of the loan period, missing T-card numbers identify overdue books.

The present transaction card used in the charging process is a reusable McBee-type keysort card. All returned cards are manually sorted by needle and refiled. Missing numbers are manually determined by visual inspection and are manually recorded to produce the overdue lists.

At the present time a considerable amount of labor (12% of total Circulation Unit labor) is spent in the handling, sorting, searching, and listing of the transaction cards in order to generate the overdue lists. It is in this area that significant savings can be made.

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Recommendation

It is proposed that the McBee keysort system be changed to a computer processed punched card system. The proposed punched card system contains many of the best features of the punched card system currently being used by Pomona, Azusa, certain Long Island, N.Y., cities, and a system under development in Inglewood.

In addition, as part of the improvement, it is proposed to change the date due and overdue system from a daily cycle system to a weekly cycle system. This will reduce the clerical load, reduce the computer printout load, and allow more local flexibility in performing staff work. With this system there would be two loan periods: a short-loan period (7 to 12 days) and a long-loan period (21 to 26 days).

Cost Comparison

For comparison purposes the costs of the present system and the proposed system are discussed here, but it must be understood that the dollar difference is not realizable in cost savings but rather in terms of circulation personnel labor that would become free to apply to badly needed staff work that is now being neglected, such as reserve book search, overdue notices, and especially shelving. In addition it should be noted that the computer charges shown here for system comparison are not new or additional charges but are costs that are already included in the present City budget.

McBee Keysort System

The present system costs are approximately as follows:

Central Circulation labor handling keysort cards is averaging 40 hrs. per week.

Assume a labor cost of $3.30 per hour.

Labor = (40) ($3.30) (52) = $6,864 per year.

Average keysort cards purchased since 1970 = $2,373 per year.

Assume 50% chargeable to Central Circulation or $1,187 per year.

Labor plus material = $6,864 + $1,187 = $8,051 per year.

For Central plus branches, this would be approximately $16,100 per year.

Proposed Punched Card System

The estimated costs for the weekly punched disposable card system are approximately as follows:

EDP recharges (budget to budget):

Assume 20 minutes of computer time per week @ $80/hr.

$$\frac{(20)\ (52)\ (80)}{60} = \$1,386.67/yr.$$

Transaction Cards:

1,000,000 cards per year @ $2.07/1000

($2.07) (1000) =	$2,070.00
Two setup charges @ $50 =	100.00
	$2,170.00/yr. TOTAL

EDP recharges + cards = approximately $3,600/yr.

The cards are used once and sold for ecology recycling. The salvage income is not included here. Note that the one-time used punched cards cost the same per year as the present reusable but more expensive keysort cards. With this system approximately 43 hours of labor in Central Circulation would be made available each week for staff work.

In order to convert to the punched card system there would be some one-time costs and these would be approximately as follows:

System design and programming.	$1,000
Card reader adaption to 51 column card	6,000
Card printing plate charge	100
	$7,100 Total

Proposed System Description

With the new system prenumbered and prepunched transaction cards would be

collected from book returns and forwarded to EDP weekly along with beginning and ending transaction card serial numbers used that week in book charging. EDP would input and sort the transaction numbers received and merge into a continuing record of each transaction number series. Overdue-notice dates would be calculated. Missing numbers would be determined for T-numbers with overdue-notice dates corresponding to the current date, and an output report would be prepared listing missing T-numbers and their associated overdue-notice types, i.e. first-reminder postal, final-notice bill, and pickup. From this list the Library Circulation Unit would read the appropriate film record, set up the manual files and prepare overdue notices.